

Pig farmers, pig eaters? Characterizing household and child feeding practices among smallholder pig farmers in Uganda

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Background

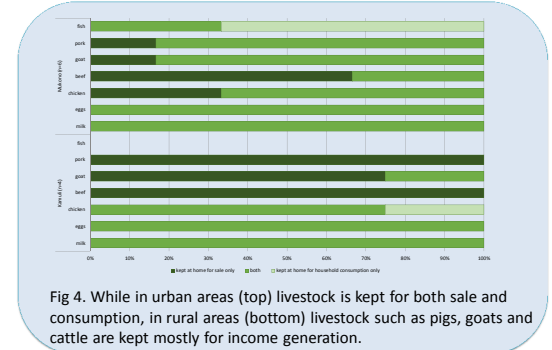
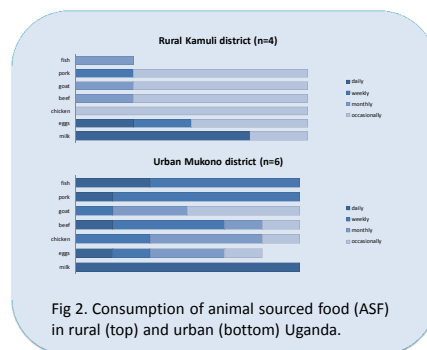
In Uganda, livestock production represents an important source of livelihoods for many people. In response to a fast growing demand for pork, and given the easier management requirements for pigs compared to other livestock, many families venture into pig production as a business opportunity. Previous assessments have reported limited diet diversity in smallholder pig farming households in Uganda, with pork as the most common meat consumed. Little is known on the specifics of children's feeding habits and its drivers.

AIM: To characterize household and children feeding practices in pig farming communities in Uganda

Methods

Household survey conducted in pig raising households in 60 randomly selected villages in Kamuli district, Eastern Uganda, as part of a larger trial (Feb-Mar 2017): pig farming knowledge and practices, and household food consumption, with emphasis on diets of children between 6-59 months. Quantitative observations were compared and complemented with findings from a set of participatory rural appraisals conducted in 2012/13: information on pork consumption habits and knowledge, attitudes towards pork safety and pork preparation practices was collected from 295 subsistence pig farmers (100 in Kamuli), 66% of them women (70% in Kamuli).

Results



	Village 1	Village 2	Village 3	Village 4	Village 5
Which foods or drinks do your children eat from weaning until 3 years of age?	Irish potato, sweet potato, passion fruit, fish sauce, milk , posho	Milk , Irish potatoes, bananas	Eggs, milk, chickens, pork stew	Posho, eggs, milk, greens, silver fish	Milk, eggs, silver fish
Why are ASF given to young children?	proper growth; body building; silver fish prevents measles	eggs and milk for proper growth	body building foods and nutritious	body building foods	body building foods
What ASF are not good to give to young children? Why?	meat because the digestive of children is very weak to digest the food	no	goats meat causes measles, diarrhea	no	no

Fig 3. The role of animal source foods in children's diets in five pig farming villages in Kamuli district.

Key messages

- Diets are rich in **fruits, tubers and vegetables** – not surprising in a fertile agricultural land.
- Frequency of **ASF in diets is LOW** (except milk and dairy products) – **pork** the most common meat consumed (not from own herd).
- 72% children had 2-3 meals/day. **Childrens' frequency of meat** consumption associated with household meat consumption habits.
- Pig farmers understand **meat is "body building" food**. Some villages report **taboos** around children (<3yrs) and meat consumption.
- All villages report **milk and eggs as positive** for children growth.
- Most houses (70%) report children get the most important food, 11% of households state women get the most important food.
- Hygiene practices are suboptimal – 67% of children had diarrhea in the previous 2 weeks. 85% of households do not boil the children's drinking water.

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